TERRA

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NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Annual Report Inside

A Message from the Director

IN OCTOBER 1999, about one-fourth of our museum members were asked to complete a survey about TERRA, giving us their opinions and suggestions for improvements in the museum's magazine. Almost 200 of the 4,000 members who received the survey responded by completing it and returning it to us, and we have now begun to tabulate and discuss the results.

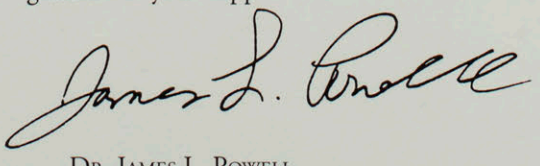
As in past surveys, our members revealed themselves to be highly educated and to view museum membership as a way of supporting education not only for their own families but also for the community at large. We were gratified to learn that the people responding spend some time reading each issue of TERRA: more than 77 percent reported perusing the magazine for from 15 to 60 minutes or more. The majority of those surveyed read all or almost all of every article in the last issue—as a group, our members continue to be interested in the wide variety of topics represented by the museum's collections and research.

Our surveying consultant Ken Struman, of Struman and Associates, was astounded at the results to a question on computer use and Internet access. The numbers suggest that more than three-fourths of our members have computers at home and that 63 percent are on line. These values show that our members are much more computer savvy than the mature adult population of the U.S. in general. Through our excellent web page at www.nhm.org, we hope to make even greater use of this vital connection to our members.

One of the first changes in TERRA that I am making is the appointment of a new editorial committee. Linda Abraham, our chief of education, will serve as chair of the committee, and its members are Karen Goldstein, chief deputy director; John Heyning, research and collections; Chris Hills, marketing and communications; Ann Muscat, strategic initiatives; Paige Simmons, membership; Michael Nauyok, exhibitions; Leonard Navarro, operations; and Robin Simpson, editing. In the months ahead, the committee will meet and review the survey results as well as solicit and evaluate ideas for even more interesting articles for the future.

Our overall goals in publishing TERRA are to ensure that members take full advantage of all the benefits of museum membership and to communicate our excitement about the museum's accomplishments and future. I thank those of you who assisted with the survey, and I invite all members to continue to let us have your comments about TERRA and other museum programs.

Our members remain our most enthusiastic and valued audience: we are very grateful for your support of the museum.



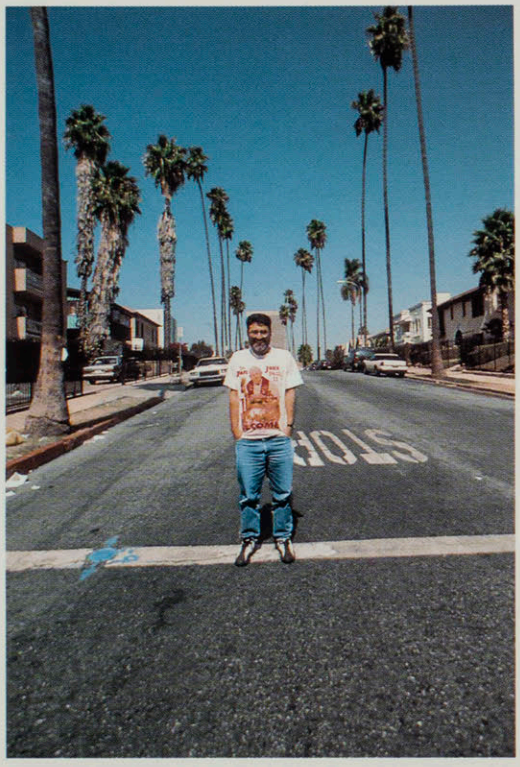
DR. JAMES L. POWELL
Museum President and Director

On exhibit in Exposition Park. . .

EL NUEVO MUNDO
The Landscape of Latino Los Angeles

Dart Gallery, through July 16

This exhibition of more than a hundred documentary photographs is Camilo José Vergara's personal account of the profound changes in physical character and social texture that have occurred in parts of Los Angeles County since 1992, as its population has become increasingly Latino. Mr. Vergara's work explores how recent immigrants decorate their homes, landscape their yards, and transform their workplaces, creating "a new world" of environments that resemble those left behind in Mexico and Central America.



Right, **Camilo José Vergara, photographed at West and Mariposa by a street vendor.**
Below, **Mr. Vergara's photograph of Palacios Iron Products on Avalon Boulevard.**

PRIDE AND HONOR
Photographs from the museum's collections

Ground floor galleries, through July 16

Southern Californians have posed for pictures in front of their homes and shops since the mid-nineteenth century, when use of the camera began to be widespread. In this exhibition of historic photographs from the museum's Seaver Center for Western History Research, families—and their pets, dray animals, wagons, and cars—are arranged in front of their residences, and the employees and customers of a number of our region's earliest businesses are shown taking a break from work out in front of the firm. The photographs will remind visitors of those in their own family albums, underscoring the fact that pride of home and honor in work are longstanding values shared by many people in many places.

El Nuevo Mundo: The Landscape of Latino Los Angeles, was organized by the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., with guest curator Camilo José Vergara and coordinating curators Joseph Rosa and Chrysanthe B. Broikos. Its appearance in Los Angeles is made possible by Union Bank of California.

A catalog to the exhibition published by the Southern California Studies Center at the University of Southern California and the Natural History Museum is available through the Museum Stores; the stores also are offering *American Ruins* (Monacelli, 1999) and *The New American Ghetto* (Rutgers, 1995), two recent books by Mr. Vergara on the evolution of America's inner cities.

Annual Report, 1998-1999
Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGES

IT IS A PLEASURE FOR ME AS PRESIDENT OF the Board of Trustees to introduce this annual report of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. As you will be able to judge for yourself, the museum is "firing on all cylinders," engaging in a rich set of current activities, and making exciting plans for the future. I have greatly appreciated the support that the museum has received from the other members of the Board of Trustees, from the Supervisors and Chief Administrative Officer of Los Angeles County, and from many other individuals and foundations. Some of this support, remarkably, has come without our even asking. This suggests to me that more people than we know appreciate the important contribution that the museum makes to the quality of life in our county and that—when called on—they stand ready to help even more. As we consider the future of the museum, that is most encouraging.

And considering the future is exactly what we have been doing for the last year. The Board of Trustees, with Dr. Powell and his fine staff, have been engaged in an intensive study of the desirability and feasibility of building a new museum of natural history. This project is gathering momentum and support every day. We are attempting to approach the project with the utmost care so as to ensure that we build the finest museum of natural history that has been built anywhere in the world. The architecture and exhibits will be unsurpassed; the building will be visually dramatic and exciting; the site will be the best available in Los Angeles County. The program to be carried out within the new building will fully integrate the essential mission-delivery divisions of the museum—collections, education, exhibits, and research.

I believe that I speak for all members of the museum family by acknowledging that, somewhat to our surprise, we find ourselves with an opportunity that last came in this country nearly 100 years ago. Only the most recent arrivals to our museum family will have signed on with the idea of building a new museum in mind, yet that is now our challenge. I pledge to do everything I can to ensure that the Board of Trustees does its part.

Thanks again to all for your support of the museum—and stay tuned! Exciting developments are just around the corner.

KEVIN W. SHARER
President, Board of Trustees
Natural History Museum of
Los Angeles County

COVER: **Troy and Carla Harris pose with their son, Austin, in front of the Natural History Museum's model of a carnotaur. The Harrises traveled to the museum from Santa Barbara to see "the dinosaur bones" as a special treat for Austin's fifth birthday. Photograph by Marc Carter.**

THIS YEAR HAS SEEN THE MUSEUM working simultaneously on two fronts. On the one hand, we have been focused on making the present museum the best that it can be. To that end, several important staff appointments have been made. One appointee familiar to all members of the museum family is Dr. John Heyning, who has been promoted from curator of mammalogy to deputy director for research and collections, replacing the retired Bob Lavenberg. John's arrival in this position coincides with a decision that our Board of Trustees has made to invest more of the museum's resources into support of our curators and their research and into the care of our priceless collections.

Within the past 2 years we have hired five new curators, some in replacement positions and some in newly added positions. We are also hiring new collections managers, curatorial assistants, and preparators, as well as adding significantly more funds to the ongoing budgets for research and collections. Most of the money for these increases is coming from the museum's endowment, reflecting the view that it is time to invest more in the core of the museum. And indeed the increased budgets can be regarded as an investment, since our curators raise consider-

Dr. James L. Powell, the museum's president and director, with a mosasaur, a carnivorous relative of the lizards that roamed the Cretaceous seas; the two specimens combined to create this spectacular mount were recovered from 70 million year old rocks in Fresno County, California.

During the report year, the museum adopted a stylized sketch of its Tamkin Dueling Dinosaurs as a new logo, to emphasize the fossils that are a strength of the collections as well as perennial favorites with museum visitors. This annual report is dedicated to the staff members and associates who care for and study our fossils and to the many people who have enriched our paleontology holdings, exhibitions, and educational programs with their donations through the years.

able outside funding for their work. The more core staff we have in the various curatorial departments, the more outside funding we can obtain.

Under the guidance of Linda Abraham, chief of education, we have been reexamining the way in which we implement our education program. Our intent is to use best practices and learning theory to make visits to the museum, especially by school groups, more effective. We have also reorganized the Exhibits Division under the leadership of Michael Nauyok, acting vice-president for exhibits. I am pleased with the progress that has been made in the past year in Exhibits, Education, and Research and Collections, the three divisions that most directly implement our important mission.

Another key appointment is of Dr. Ann Muscat as executive vice-president for strategic initiatives. Ann earned her Ph.D. in marine biology from the University of Southern California, was director of the Wrigley Center on Catalina Island, and was in charge of the new museum project for our fine neighbor, the California Science Center. Ann is directing the planning for our new museum; I know of no better qualified person in the country. In just a few months, she has become one of us.

WE CONTINUE to make careful, steady progress toward the realization of the new museum, and I sense that support is building among all constituencies. We have narrowed the search for a site down from three dozen possibilities to a handful. Over the next few months, we will be studying these closely to identify the one that best allows us to bring our mission to the maximum number of people. The final choice may not be easy, but it will be made most thoughtfully by our Board of Trustees.

We have been working hard to develop the program that will be implemented in the new museum. In this process, we have

recognized that we are the only major United States museum to cover science, history, and anthropology. Other institutions have two of the three subject areas; only we have all three. This reminds us once again of the opportunity that we have—not merely to improve an old museum but to create a brand new one.

We are developing a funding plan and are beginning to consider how we might go about selecting an architect. We will be meeting with members of the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County to seek their advice and support. It is all most exciting.

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM will be pleased to know that history has repeated itself. In 1961, the Los Angeles County Museum of Science, History, and Art gave birth to the present Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and in 1977 to the Page Museum (which although in a separate building remains part of our museum family). In each case, trustees of the parent museum felt that there was sufficient need and support for a new museum to be formed and to receive some appropriate part of the collections of the parent museum.

I am pleased to say that this about to happen with the Petersen Automotive Museum, which may well be the best of its kind in the nation. Although I am writing this report before an agreement is signed, sealed, and delivered, I anticipate that by the time readers receive the annual report the Petersen Automotive Museum will be independent, operated by a new charitable foundation that will have received not only an additional generous gift from Robert and Margie Petersen but also, either as an outright gift or as a long-term loan, much of the automobile collection of the Natural History Museum Foundation. This is a happy outcome for all concerned, and we wish the new Petersen Museum the best and pledge our support.

Thus we end 1999 with a museum that is delivering its important mission more effectively than ever and that is ready to seize the opportunity to build a new museum of natural history, the first to be created in a century. All supporters of the museum should be proud and optimistic about our future.

JAMES L. POWELL
President and Director
Natural History Museum of
Los Angeles County

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As of February 1, 2000

OVERVIEW

The Natural History Museum exists to advance knowledge and to enable people of all ages, backgrounds, and interests to understand and appreciate their natural and cultural heritage. The museum assembles, conserves, interprets, and holds in trust collections of irreplaceable objects from nature and human history. These collections reveal the history of the Earth and the evolution and diversity of life and culture. They sustain programs of research, exhibits, education, and publication.
Mission statement, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Four Museums

Thirty-three million specimens and artifacts spanning 3.5 billion years of Earth's history form the basis for the Natural History Museum's programs of research and interpretation. Since it opened to the public in 1913, the museum has grown to encompass four major cultural institutions, each with permanent and changing exhibitions, as well as a number of important scholarly and educational operations.

The **Natural History Museum, Exposition Park,** is the second largest natural science and cultural history museum in the United States. Its 150,000 square feet of public galleries—which include halls devoted to gems and minerals, living and extinct mammals, dinosaurs, birds, marine life, Native American and pre-Columbian cultures, and U.S. and Southwest history—attract 360,000 visitors annually. Its architecturally distinguished building also houses the administration for the entire Natural History Museum family as well as most of the institution's collections and research laboratories.

The **George C. Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits** in Hancock Park is located at the site of one of the world's richest deposits of Ice Age fossils. Its galleries, laboratories, and storerooms house the Rancho La Brea heritage—more than 3 million fossil plants and animals that have been excavated from the La Brea Tar Pits since the early 1900s. This vast collection, which is the basis for the museum's rich displays of extinct creatures and prehistoric landscapes, gives an incredibly detailed picture of life in North America from 4,000 to 40,000 years ago. The Page Museum hosts 240,000 visitors each year.

The **Petersen Automotive Museum**, one of the most carefully researched and vividly rendered museums of its kind, chronicles the influence of the car on all aspects of life in southern California in the twentieth century. Through its "streetscape" of dioramas and its special exhibitions of rare and classic passenger vehicles, trucks, and motorcycles, the museum dramatically illustrates technological and design innovation as well as auto-related highlights from Los Angeles history. Attendance in 1998–1999, the Petersen Museum's fifth full year of operation, was 133,000.

The Spanish colonial style mansion that houses the **William S. Hart Museum**, in Hart Park in the City of Newhall, was once the home of the silent screen star, director, and scriptwriter famed for his portrayals of Western heroes. Mr. Hart's personal effects and movie paraphernalia are displayed in the museum's historically appointed rooms along with treasures from his collection of Native American and Western American art. Each year, more than 150,000 people visit Hart Park and Museum.

The Research and Collections Programs

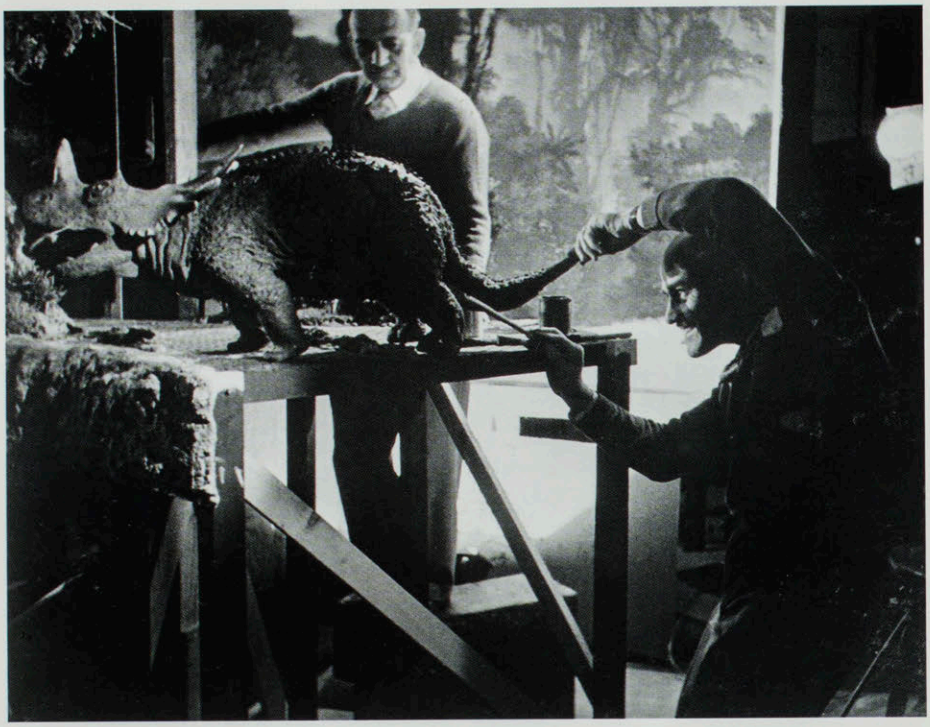
The Natural History Museum's programs of research and collections center on objects and specimens relating to twenty-one disciplines. The various collections range in size from the relatively small but unique holdings at the Hart and Petersen Museums to those in, for example, invertebrate zoology and paleontology, which are of worldwide significance in their size and scope. The collections are maintained by a staff of 61 specialists, including 21 curators—each with responsibilities for research, collection growth, and interpretation.

The **History Program** is based on two collections dealing with United States history. The material culture collection of more than 500,000 objects, one of the largest of its kind, is unique in its diversity of artifacts from the American past as well as its focus on California and Southwest history; the collection documents and supports exhibitions in several major halls in the Exposition Park building. The Seaver Center for Western History Research, a repository for manuscripts, books, maps, photographs, and other exhibit and research materials, includes more than 1 million records relating to California and the American West; it is an important resource for scholars as well as film makers and others involved in documentary and educational projects.

The scholars of the history program specialize in California history, particularly urban history and the impact of the state on the rest of the nation.

The **William S. Hart Collection** includes the furnishings of his home, an important collection of weapons, Western American and Native American art, and documents and photographs relating to his stage, film, and ranching careers. Hart's papers form an important reference collection in the Exposition Park museum's Seaver Center; his personal effects and many of his art treasures remain in place in his home and its outbuildings in Hart Park, where they can be enjoyed by the public.

The **Transportation Collection** includes more than 180 cars, trucks, and motorcycles built between 1897 and the present as well as a number of artifacts related to the history of road travel in the United States and a large collection of books, journals, and photographs on the history of the automobile. The collection supports the exhibits and programs at the Petersen Automotive Museum; the historians who maintain the collection are experts in the maintenance and conservation of antique vehicles.



Two collections are at the core of the **Anthropology Program.** The archaeology collection consists of about 150,000 objects from sites of human occupation around the Western Hemisphere and represents cultures tracing back as far as the Paleo-Indian Period, 12,000 years ago; its materials from Mexico and Central and South America form the core of a major hall on pre-Columbian cultures in the Exposition Park museum. The ethnology collection of about 34,000 artifacts produced by the native peoples of the New World, Oceania, Africa, and Asia is a particularly important resource on Native American cultures; both ancient and contemporary examples of the work of North American peoples are displayed in the Exposition Park museum's Times Mirror Hall of Native American Cultures.

Staff experts associated with the program include an ethnographer specializing in contemporary and traditional Zuni ceramics and an archaeologist studying the origins of human civilizations in Peru.

The **Mineral Sciences Program** is centered on a collection of nearly 60,000 minerals, rocks, meteorites, and gems that, although worldwide in scope, is particularly strong in materials from California and in native gold, gem crystals, and colored gems. The collection ranks as the most important of its kind in the western United States. Significant specimens are on display in the Exposition Park museum's Hall of Gems and Minerals. The curator's research focuses on new or inadequately characterized minerals.

The museum's **Invertebrate Zoology Program** encompasses six extensive collections, including:

- Four million specimens of polychaete worms, the third largest collection in the world. Because marine worms are important indicators of the health of their sediment and seawater habitats, the museum's polychaetes are in wide use and are critical to national and international environmental assessments. The curator studies polychaete evolution, and the collection manager is an authority on West Coast polychaetes.

- Five million crustacean specimens, a collection that ranks second in size in the nation only to the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution. Included is a particularly wide array of shrimps, lobsters, crabs, and related aquatic arthropods from the eastern Pacific Ocean. The curator specializes in freshwater branchiopods, deep-sea hydrothermal vent shrimps and crabs, and crustaceans of coral reefs.

- A malacology collection that includes 4 million specimens and is the largest of its kind in the western United States. The collection is particularly rich in mollusks from the eastern Pacific and includes an important section of microscopic fauna. The curator is a specialist in deep-sea mollusks, in particular, hydrothermal vent limpets.

- An echinoderm collection that is worldwide in scope and unparalleled in its wealth of specimens from the eastern and western Pacific; the fauna of the Caribbean is also particularly well represented among the total of 600,000 specimens of sea stars, sea urchins, sea cucumbers, and related marine organisms. The curator is an expert on brittle stars and allied animals.

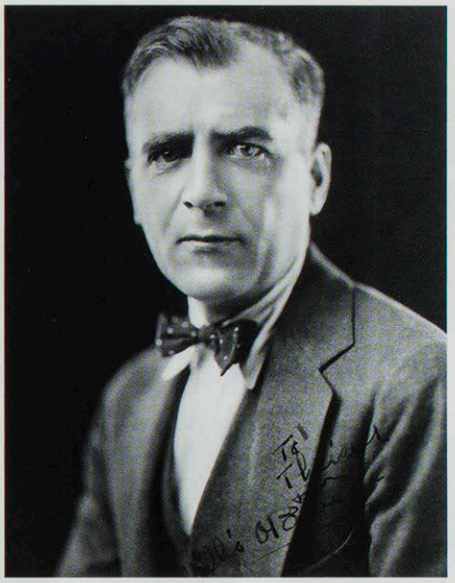
- An entomology collection with 5.3 million specimens of insects, spiders, and related arthropods from throughout the world. It is particularly rich in materials from the southwestern United States and the American tropics and includes one of the

nation's best collections of ants, bees, and wasps as well as a major assemblage of butterflies and moths. The curator's research focuses on the phorids—tiny "ant-decapitating" flies.

■ More than 3.5 million specimens of fossil invertebrates documenting more than 600 million years of earth history. The sixth largest collection of its kind on the North American continent, it includes representatives of every major invertebrate group known from the fossil records as well as species from all continents and geological time periods.

At the heart of the **Vertebrate Zoology Program** are rich and diverse collections representing living and extinct animals of the world, including:

■ A vertebrate paleontology collection that focuses on Cenozoic specimens from western North America but also contains a small yet significant selection of dinosaurs. With more than 500,000 specimens, the collection is one of the largest in the world and includes some of the oldest recognized vertebrates as well as the remains of animals that became extinct less than 12,000 years ago. Among the staff are experts in fossil mammals of East Africa; fossil vertebrates of Amazonia; fossil marine reptiles and fishes of North America; small fossil reptiles and mammals of California; dinosaurs and the origin of birds; and fossil marine mammals of the Pacific Rim.



Opposite, art technician Mario Larrinaga touches up a *Styracosaurus* model prior to its big scene in the 1933 movie *Son of Kong*. The effect in the still photograph below was created in several stages. The actors were first filmed cornered in a hillside crevice, which was then duplicated in a miniature set. When the scale model ceratopsian was placed at the front of the little set, with the film of the cowering actors running at the back through the use of rear-screen projection, the now "life-size" dinosaur appeared to be on the verge of attacking the people.

Both of these images as well as many others detailing the special effects work on *Son of Kong* are from a unique scrapbook donated to the museum by the movie's chief technician and animator, Willis O'Brien (shown at left in a 1930s portrait). Images from the scrapbook are frequently used in television documentaries about Mr. O'Brien and the history of stop-action animation, as are other items from the O'Brien collection, including models from *Son of Kong*'s predecessor, the classic 1933 *King Kong*. The scrapbook is one of thousands of items in the Seaver Center for Western History Research documenting the development of the motion picture industry.

Images from Seaver Center Photograph Collection, No. P141

MARC CARTER

Dr. Maria Pellegrini, program director for the W.M. Keck Foundation *(left)* and Mercedes V. Talley, the foundation's program officer *(second from left)*, in the museum's new DNA research laboratory with assistant curators Dr. Christine Thacker and Dr. David Kizirian, who codirect the laboratory and pursue broad-scale molecular studies there as well. At the end of the report year, with a major grant from the Keck Foundation, the museum began to refurbish the laboratory and to fully equip it to generate and analyze DNA sequences, which are providing museum scientists with an exciting new tool to use in studying biodiversity.

The Keck research program is supporting a variety of educational opportunities. In collaboration with Andrew Thompson, a graduate student from the University of California, Santa Barbara, Dr. Thacker, an ichthyologist, is using the new lab in studies of populations of several reef fish species. Dr. Kizirian, who is a herpetologist, is advising research assistant Michael Wall on an examination of the evolution of eye color in mountain rattlesnakes and is working with entomology curator Dr. Brian Brown on studies of bee-killing flies; two USC undergraduate students are currently gaining experience in the molecular lab through the museum's work study program by assisting Drs. Brown and Kizirian in the bee-killing flies research.

Three scientists are scheduled to begin work in the laboratory in a new postdoctoral research program initiated with money from the Keck grant: Dr. Daniel Geiger, a recent graduate of USC, has now begun his studies of the evolution and ecology of primitive snails, and two other scientists have been invited to join him, one to investigate patterns of distribution in marine invertebrates of the eastern Pacific and Caribbean, and the other to conduct studies of the evolution of larvae in scaleworm polychaetes.

The Rancho La Brea collection center includes a further 3.5 million fossils—plants, invertebrates, and vertebrates retrieved from the asphalt deposits in and around Hancock Park over the last century; these materials make up the world's largest collection of terrestrial fossils from the Late Pleistocene and facilitate the research and educational programs of the Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits.

■ A collection of 5 million fishes, one of the largest and most comprehensive in the United States. Included are major holdings of marine fishes from the Pacific and Antarctic—in particular, midwater and coastal habitats—and freshwater collections from the New World Tropics and California. Scientists working with this material include specialists in larval fishes, sculpins, dwarf sharks, California marine and freshwater fishes, midwater fishes, and cutlassfishes; the curator studies the ontogeny and evolution of gobies, a large group of tropical and temperate inshore fishes distinguished by their diversity and often tiny size.

■ A collection of approximately 180,000 specimens of amphibians and reptiles, which is one of the top ten in the United States in size and significance. The coverage is global but is particularly strong for the southwestern U.S., Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, and Africa. In addition to specimens preserved in alcohol, there are significant ancillary holdings of skeletons, chromosome preparations, and frozen tissue samples for DNA analyses. The curator studies southeast Asian frogs and a family of Central and South American lizards that includes aquatic, arboreal, burrowing, limbless, and unisexual species.

■ A bird collection, which with its 111,000 specimens is the second largest in western North America; material from 80 percent of the world's genera, and 60 percent of the world's species, is included. It is particularly rich in birds from South America and Africa, and its holdings from parts of Uganda and Kenya represent areas that are now completely deforested. The collection, which is maintained by a curator with expertise in fossils birds and a collection manager who is expert in the field identification of birds of North America, supports one of the Exposition Park museum's permanent exhibitions, the Ralph W. Schreiber Hall of Birds.

■ A mammals collection of 95,000 specimens that contains representatives of all of the orders and families of the world and includes the world's second largest assemblage of marine species as well as extensive holdings of bats and a large series of African and Central American mammals. The new curator is an expert in the evolution and natural history of primates.

The **Library Services Program** administers a collection of printed materials and ephemera, including almost 120,000 books and a greater number of periodical volumes on natural history, history, and anthropology, the largest collection of its kind in California. The collection is particularly rich in material on Los Angeles and Southwestern history, including early judicial and electoral records. The librarians are specialists not only in library organization and management but also in computer literature searching and rare book bibliography.

Programs of Public Outreach

The Education and Exhibition Divisions work at all four facilities in the Natural History Museum complex to build bridges between the research collections and the owners of these collections—the public. The museum's professional educators and designers serve as interpreters, planning and executing exhibits that use the collections and the expertise of our staff scholars to provide enjoyable learning experiences for visitors. Our public programs are the vehicle for curatorial contact with members, visitors, and students.

The education staff also develops and implements supplemental and enriching events and courses—such as school tours, workshops and classes, lectures and symposia, outreach programs, teacher training courses, and publications—that provide in-depth information about nature and culture. These offerings reached more than 760,000 individuals during the year: nearly 210,000 school children visited the four museums with their classes, while another 350,000 people were served by the outreach and artifact loan services.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Hancock Park renovation

At its reopening in mid-1999 after a $10 million renovation, Hancock Park was called the "village green dedicated to science, natural history, art, and culture." Among the many new features in the 23-acre park on Wilshire Boulevard, which contains the famous La Brea Tar Pits and is home to the Page Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, are a 150-seat granite amphitheater, winding pathways, and lush landscaping. The improvements include a refurbishment of the building surrounding the Observation Pit, where a partially unearthed deposit of fossils is on display, and of Pit 91, the site of continuing annual excavation.

Following an early summer rededication ceremony, the park was bustling with visitors anxious to enjoy all the public attractions. The start of the Pit 91 annual excavation season was among the many opening events, and media attention was enhanced by a live-remote broadcast by ABC-TV's *Good Morning America* on July 28. Press coverage of Pit 91 has been sustained by a special page on the museum's World Wide Web site created by Stephen Ibarra, a Getty Intern at the Page Museum for summer 1999.

Publishing by museum scholars

A scientific or historical study by one of the museum's researchers is not complete until the results are published in a scholarly journal or book. Through these publications, our scholars communicate with their colleagues and maintain the museum's international reputation as an important center of research. But our experts must also make their findings available to the general public. During the report year, the staff of the Research and Collections Branch produced a number of papers and book chapters for technical publications, as well as magazine articles and other publications of general interest—including a CD-ROM on minerals, by Dr. Anthony R. Kampf, curator of mineral sciences, and a book for young readers on dinosaur research in Argentina, by Dr. Luis Chiappe, associate curator of paleontology, and Dr. Lowell Dingus.

A 1987 book, *Laetoli, a Pliocene site in northern Tanzania,* by Mary D. Leakey and the museum's paleontologist and chief curator John M. Harris, was honored as one of "the 100 or so books that shaped a Century of Science." Writing in the November-December 1999 issue of *American Scientist,* Philip and Phylis Morrison note that, at Laetoli some 3.5 million years ago, "two small ancestors of ours . . . walked hand in hand, leaving their footprints on the fast-falling volcanic ash. The [Leakey and Harris] monograph that spins out the fully supported story is about as technical and yet as thrilling as one book can get."

Complete listings of staff and museum publications during the report year appear in the annual report section of the museum's Web page, www.nhm.org/annual_report.

Parents Involved, Pigeons Everywhere

The Natural History Museum was among seven U.S. institutions chosen to participate in Parents Involved, Pigeons Everywhere (PIPE), a program sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. With funding from the National Science Foundation, PIPE makes use of urban pigeon populations to encourage family-centered science explorations.

In 1999, parents from local communities spent time at the museum learning how to conduct field investigations into pigeon coloration with their children and discovering how the information they gather will be used by scientists at Cornell. The families then joined museum educators and Kimball Garrett, ornithology collections manager, for a family fair held at the museum. In addition to pigeon watching in Exposition Park, they took part in hands-on activities related to bird biology and were treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the bird collections to see some of the more exotic relatives of the common pigeon. The museum will continue its partnership with PIPE in the coming year.

Bratcher Chair in Malacology

The Natural History Museum will establish its first endowed chair with a generous gift from Twila Bratcher-Critchlow, a longtime friend of the museum. Upon its maturity, the trust established by Mrs. Bratcher-Critchlow will support the Bratcher Chair in Malacology, helping to sustain and enhance the museum's excellent work in the field of mollusks and their close relatives and to encourage further research and collecting efforts.

Mrs. Bratcher-Critchlow is an honorary staff member of the museum, having served as a museum associate in the invertebrate zoology program since 1967. An expert on gastropods, a large class of single-shelled mollusks, she has written a number of scientific articles and is coauthor of the definitive book on the carnivorous and often beautiful shelled invertebrates known as terebras, auger shells, and marlin spikes.

In recent years, the museum's mollusk collection—under the direction of curator Dr. James H. McLean—has grown to become one of the finest in the world, with the largest and most complete assemblage of specimens from the waters of the eastern Pacific between Alaska and Chile.

Prehistoric landscaping

Habitat restoration around the Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits has lately taken on a new meaning: in a small part of Hancock Park, we intend to plant vegetation that grew there at the end of the last Ice Age. Unlike the saber-toothed cats and dire wolves, the plants that existed here during the Ice Age did not become extinct; instead—as climatic and other environmental conditions changed between 10,000 and 40,000 years ago—the ranges of some plant species shifted, and many are now only found growing in the wild somewhere else on the continent.

In partnership with the Miracle Mile Civic Coalition, the Hancock Park Elementary School, and Fong Hart Schneider Landscape Architects, the Page Museum is working to establish and maintain a prehistoric botanic garden that will complement our sculptures of now-extinct Ice Age animals. The Pleistocene Habitat Restoration Project will demonstrate the value of research at the world-famous tar pits by highlighting life forms that once thrived and then died out locally. Visitors will be able to take a self-guided tour along a trail through the garden; together with a companion field trip guide and website, the project will provide both

environmental and educational benefits for the community.

The Pleistocene Habitat Restoration Project is funded through an $18,250 grant, applied for during the report period and awarded in September 1999, from the Urban Resources Partnership, part of the Department of Environmental Affairs of the City of Los Angeles.

Petersen Museum acquisitions

The collection of the Petersen Automotive Museum was significantly enhanced when local businessman Anthony Goldschmidt donated a 1962 Ferrari 400 Superamerica, a luxurious and rakish coupe designed for comfortable high-speed driving. This car, one of only nineteen of the "Series II" model to be constructed, was specially ordered by Mr. Goldschmidt's father and was one of the last Superamericas to have remained in the family of its original owner.

A second prized addition to the Petersen's collection is the yellow taxicab, a 1993 Chevrolet Caprice, featured in more than 30 episodes of *Seinfeld.* The cab was donated by Budget Rent a Car of Beverly Hills, and cast members from the top-rated television show were on hand when the vehicle was added to the Petersen's Hollywood Gallery.

The Gluck Skymobile

A grant of $1.6 million from the Maxwell H. Gluck Foundation is enabling the museum to develop the Skymobile, a new educational outreach program. Using leading-edge technology and current scientific research, the Skymobile will travel to Los Angeles area schools with lessons and experiences in astrobiology, an emerging field concerned with the formation and diversification of planetary systems and the nature and origin of life.

The Skymobile is being designed to act as a national education model, and its comprehensive programs will include teacher orientations, activities to use before and after the mobile classroom's visit, and science kits for use in regular lessons.

The Skymobile will join the Natural History Museum's other two traveling classrooms, the Earthmobile and the Seamobile, which are also supported by grants from the Gluck Foundation.

Museum in the news

In the report year, the Media Division focused on raising awareness of the museum's outstanding research and extraordinary exhibitions. Success came in buckets with the successful media launch of the annual excavation of Pit 91 at the Page Museum, including coverage in papers across the U.S. generated by a story that ran on the national Associated Press wire service. CNN and six local television stations carried the story, and a long feature appeared on KCET-TV's *Life & Times;* people around the world could also log onto the Discovery Channel's website for a full feature on the excavation. During the summer, more than 70 print articles, 20 minutes of television airtime, and 50 minutes of radio coverage were generated about the world-famous excavation and the Page Museum.

The opening of *The Great Russian Dinosaurs* exhibition and the popular Insect Fair at the Natural History Museum received extensive media coverage, including television segments on ABC's *World News Tonight,* CNN's *Headline News,* and ABC affiliates' news programs across the U.S. and a national print feature on the Associated Press newswire. In all more than 2½ hours of television and radio coverage were produced.

When scientific explanation and opinion were needed, local radio shows as well as network evening news programs often turned to the museum's experts. Dr. James Powell was featured in a number of interviews regarding the auction of fossils, including a discussion on National Public Radio. Tom Brokaw of NBC's *Nightly News* flew to Los Angeles to interview the museum's marine expert Dr. John Heyning about the increase in the number of whale strandings. Dr. Luis Chiappe received international media coverage for his dinosaur research in Patagonia; his studies of the evolution of flight in early birds were covered in *Nature* and *Newsweek* and on BBC radio.

Dining with the dinosaurs

With exotic animal dioramas from around the world, graceful columns of imported marble, and gallery after gallery of priceless artifacts arrayed in novel and elegant settings, the Natural History Museum remains one of southern California's top venues for corporate meetings, receptions, weddings, and dinners for 10 to 4,000 people. During the report year, its popularity was noted in several publications for the party planning industry, and *Los Angeles Magazine* ranked it among the top fifty local sites for entertaining.

In summer 1998, Pfizer, Inc., held seven educational receptions at the museum, which brought in 3,500 visitors during the run of the special exhibition on microbes. As part of the kickoff celebrations for its breast cancer initiative, the Magic Johnson Foundation hosted a party for 1,000 people at the Page Museum, another very popular setting for events. The proceeds from these and many other parties and meetings held in the museums benefit educational and exhibition programming, as does the use of the buildings as sets for filming; at the end of the 1998–1999 fiscal year, 20th Century Fox began six weeks of filming in and around the Exposition Park museum's old rotunda—in a project that generated more than $140,000 in revenue for the museum.

Roots & Shoots Student Fair

In late spring 1999, the Natural History Museum hosted the first annual Los Angeles student fair for Roots & Shoots, the international organization for young people supported by the Jane Goodall Institute for Wildlife Research, Education, and Conservation. Classes of students who had carried out Roots & Shoots action projects displayed their work at the fair and received recognition for their efforts from Dr. Goodall, who was guest speaker at the event.

The initiation of this local program is particularly satisfying to the museum's educators because they have cooperated over the past year with other area education groups to create the curriculum upon which the Roots & Shoots program is based.

Public Science Day at the museum

The Natural History Museum was invited for the second year in a row to participate in Public Science Day, a national program for science education sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Franklin Institute, and UNYSIS. The

museum again partnered with the James A. Foshay Learning Center, a kindergarten-through-twelfth-grade school in south central Los Angeles, to explore the theme "Our Changing Earth."

More than 600 students from Foshay created projects at their school; to prepare for the work, many of the children were given special tours of the museum's Gem and Mineral Hall, Discovery Center, and Vertebrate Paleontology Laboratory. Then, in January 1999, sixty of the sixth, seventh, and eighth graders gathered in the museum's grand foyer to display their finished projects, which ranged from models of volcanoes to an interactive coral reef "touching" diorama.

Cars and Stars

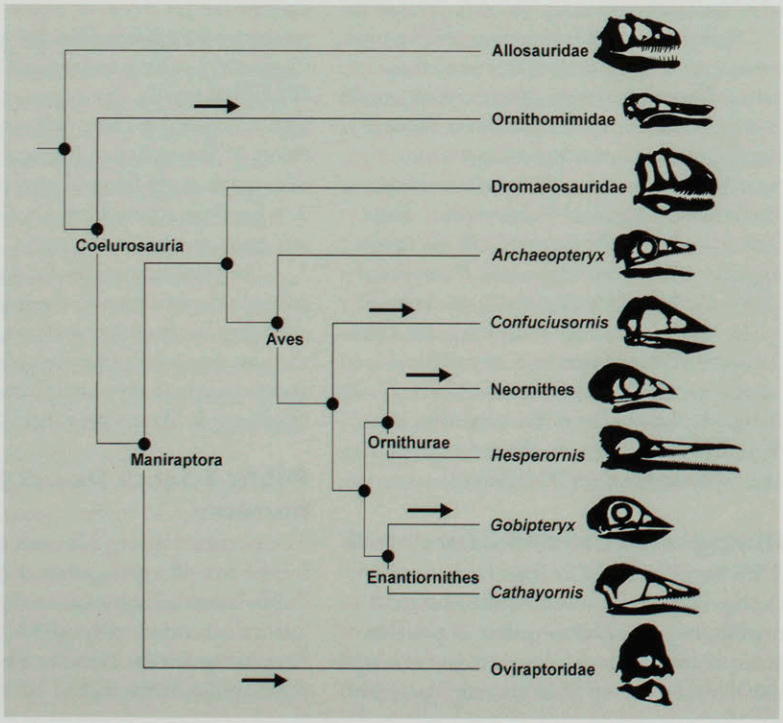
The premiere of *Surf's Up! The Great American Woody*, an exhibition of the wood-panelled vehicles now synonymous with the California beach party, set the tone for the Petersen Automotive Museum's second annual Cars and Stars Gala in June. Fourteen hundred guests attired in tropical prints enjoyed the festivities, and the museum netted more than $200,000 in support of its programming and operations. The fund-raising event was cochaired by Bob and Margie Petersen and Bruce and Raylene Meyer.

The Cars and Stars gala also provided a spectacular launch for the Christie's 1999 auto auction, held in the Petersen two days later. Christie's has become a supporter of the gala as has DaimlerChrysler, which sponsors the annual Concours on Rodeo, held three days after the gala this year. The

Two specimens of the primitive bird *Confuciusornis sanctus*, from 125 million-year-old rocks in northeastern China, where hundreds of fossils of the species have been found. The preservation of these ancient, almost crow-sized birds is spectacular: on the fossil at right, a dark halo of feathers surrounds the skeleton, and remnants of the horny sheaths that capped the large sickle-shaped claws at the tip of the wings are visible in this and most specimens.

One of the species' most startling features—considering its age—is on the head. Although most early birds bore small teeth, the "sacred bird of Confucius" was toothless, its jaws covered instead with a robust beak. *Confuciusornis sanctus* is the earliest known toothless bird, but as the genealogical diagram below shows, beaks have evolved several times (arrows) in the evolution of birds and their meat-eating dinosaurian forerunners.

In the last 10 years, concepts of the early evolution of birds have been dramatically revised as dozens of new primitive species have been unearthed around the world, documenting an explosion of diversity that occurred during the first half of the history of birds, between 65 and 150 million years ago. Dr. Luis Chiappe, who joined the museum staff as associate curator of vertebrate paleontology during the report period, has led or participated in the study of most of this new avian diversity. The images here are from a recently published monograph on *Confuciusornis* that he coauthored with colleagues from the National Geological Museum of China, Beijing, and the American Museum of Natural History.



Specimens National Geological Museum of China, Beijing; photographs Lorraine Meeker

museum's Cars and Stars party has become the opening event for a major weekend of automotive celebrations in southern California.

Checkered Flag support for Petersen

Membership in the Checkered Flag 200, the support group for the Petersen Automotive Museum, rose to more than 225 during the report year and provided $225,000 in funding for the museum's programming. Additional money was raised at various special events organized by the group. In January 1999, 600 people gathered at the Petersen to remember the Trans Am races of 1965 to 1972; a number of drivers and crew who participated in these fast and fierce competitions were on hand, and approximately $20,000 was raised for the museum.

Outstanding volunteers

A talented and dedicated group of volunteers has an essential role in almost all phases of operations at the four museums. Volunteers are the mainstay of the Education Division's school tours and outreach programs, and they also provide thousands of hours of expert and energetic assistance with research, collections management, excavation, and exhibition preparation as well as membership recruitment and special events. In the 1998–1999 year, volunteers contributed 68,170 hours of service.

The Natural History Museum is grateful to the curatorial volunteers and the members of the Docent Roundtable, the Museum Service Council, the Petersen Museum Pit Crew, and the Page Museum Docent Associates as well as the Page Museum Laboratory volunteers and the volunteer committee of the Friends of Hart Park and Museum. A complete list of our 460 volunteers appears in the annual report section of the museum's Web page, www.nhm.org/annual_report.

Special Exhibitions

July 1, 1998, through June 30, 1999

Natural History Museum, Exposition Park

Treasures of the Sierra Nevada, Paintings by Artists of the California Art Club. Rotunda, to August 1998

Microbes: Invisible Invaders, Amazing Allies. Dart Gallery, to September 1998

Stones from Heaven: Ancient Chinese Jade. First floor gallery, to October 1998

Hunters of the Sky. Dart Gallery, October 1998 to January 1999

Hunters of the Southwest. Ground floor galleries, October 1998 to January 1999

Barbie, Teddy & Jack: Classic Toys of Yesterday. First floor gallery, November 1998 to June 1999

Nature's Original Impressionists, Photographs by Richard F. Wheeler. Second floor gallery, opened January 1999

The Great Russian Dinosaurs. Dart Gallery, January to May 1999

Museum Cretaceous Research. Ground floor galleries, January to May 1999

Ducommun: Southern California's Business Pioneer. Rotunda, April to May 1999

Pavilion of Wings. South Lawn, opened May 1999

Butterflies in Living Color. Dart Gallery, opened June 1999

Morning Becomes Electra/Little Monsters: Photographs of Joel Aaron Glassman. Ground floor galleries, opened June 1999

Museum Treasures. Director's Gallery, continuing

The Community's Choice: Selections from the African Collections. Second floor gallery, continuing

PHOTOGRAPHS DICK MEIER

Petersen Automotive Museum

It's a Duesy! Powerful Cars for Powerful People. Grand Salon, to January 1999

American Muscle Cars. State-of-the-Art Gallery, to August 1998

Fifty Years of Porsche. State-of-the-Art Gallery, September through October 1998

Pedal Cars: Kid-sized Classics. State-of-the-Art Gallery, October 1998 through March 1999

Cars & Culture: Photographic Images of the 20th Century. State-of-the-Art Gallery, October 1998 through March 1999

Fifty Years of Land Rover. Second floor galleries, September through October 1998

Trans-Am Racing Cars. Second floor galleries, January through March 1999

Postwar Sportscars: Performance & Passion for the Road. Grand Salon, February through May 1999

Treasures of the Vault: Cars from the Permanent Collection. State-of-the-Art Gallery, opened April 1999

Surf's Up! The Great American Woody. Grand Salon, opened June 1999

Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits

Nature's Original Impressionists, Photographs by Richard F. Wheeler. Opened April 1999

Traveling Exhibitions

CALIFORNIA REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Coyote Point Museum for Environmental Education, San Mateo, California, July to September 1998

Humboldt State University Natural History Museum, Arcata, California, November 1998 to March 1999

CATS! WILD TO MILD

Explorers Hall, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., to September 1998

Wichita Falls Museum & Art Center, Wichita Falls, Texas, October 1998 to January 1999

Museum of Science, Boston, Massachusetts, February to May 1999

Nassau County Museum, Port Washington, New York, opened June 1999

Skulls of *Xiphactinus audax,* an extinct giant ray-finned fish that lived in the seas of North America and Europe at the end of the age of reptiles. The skulls, recovered from Late Cretaceous rock formations in northwestern Kansas, are approximately 85 million years old. The complete skeleton of the fish above would have been approximately 13 feet long (the smaller specimen was approximately 7 feet long).

As found and as usually exhibited, the skulls and skeletons of such fossils have been compacted during preservation and fossilization until they are nearly two-dimensional, like the specimen at left. The three-dimensional restoration was prepared by Michael Triebold, aided by consultation with Dr. J.D. Stewart, assistant curator of vertebrate paleontology. Each bone was removed from the sediment matrix and reconstructed; all were then reassembled in their original positions. The process, which requires a sophisticated understanding of fish anatomy, helps both scientists and the public to more accurately visualize how such giants looked and behaved in life.

The report period was a banner year for *Xiphactinus* in the museum. In conjunction with *The Great Russian Dinosaurs* exhibit, fossils of several Cretaceous organisms from the museum collections, including the three-dimensional *Xiphactinus audax* skull, were placed on exhibit. More recently, the skull—loaned to the museum in 1992—was donated to the collections by Mr. Triebold.

Another landmark was achieved in August of 1998 when an expedition organized by the Museum Travel Program and led by Dr. Stewart collected an 89-million-year-old partial skeleton of *Xiphactinus audax* in Kansas. Remains of a last meal preserved with the fossil provide the first evidence that the species sometimes ate another carnivorous fish, *Pachyrhizodus*, and give a little more information about the interactions of animals in a marine community of the distant past.

Recently, the three-dimensional skull of *Xiphactinus audax* has been on display in the Exposition Park museum's main foyer, where it has become a favorite of many museum employees and volunteers as well as visitors.

Masters of the Ocean Realm: Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises

Ibaraki Nature Museum, Iwai-City, Ibaraki, Japan, January to April 1999

Museum of Science, Boston, Massachusetts, opened June 1999

Sharks! Fact and Fantasy

San Diego Museum of Natural History, San Diego, California, October 1998 to January 1999

Discovery Place, Charlotte, North Carolina, February to May 1999

Nauticus, the National Maritime Center, Norfolk, Virginia, opened June 1999

Treasures of the Tar Pits

National Museum of Natural Science, Taichung, Taiwan, October 1998 to February 1999

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County consists of two separate financial entities: the Los Angeles County Department of the Natural History Museum and the private, nonprofit Foundation of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. The financial statement below demonstrates the combined level of funding provided by each of these entities. Audited financial statements for the Natural History Museum Foundation are available on request from the museum's Executive Offices.

The year 1998–1999 was a successful one financially. We ended the year with a slight deficit in the Foundation budget ($222,405), which was offset with a surplus ($509,000) on the County side. Admission revenues were reduced by $251,331, in part because we decided to offer school tours for free. We also had a slight decrease in general attendance, which we believe was caused by external factors. Exposition Park attendance was reduced in August and September 1998 when fencing was put up around the park in preparation for the Labor Day NASCAR races (this year, we were able to reduce the races' negative impact on the museum by persuading the organizers to make a slight change in the course). Attendance at the Page Museum was affected by the refurbishment going on all around it in Hancock Park, and Hart Park and Museum attendance suffered when the mansion was closed on two occasions for a total of 12 weeks for major repairs. The Hart Museum now has a new heating and air-conditioning system, and the Page Museum is enjoying the benefits of a vastly improved setting and exciting new educational programs.

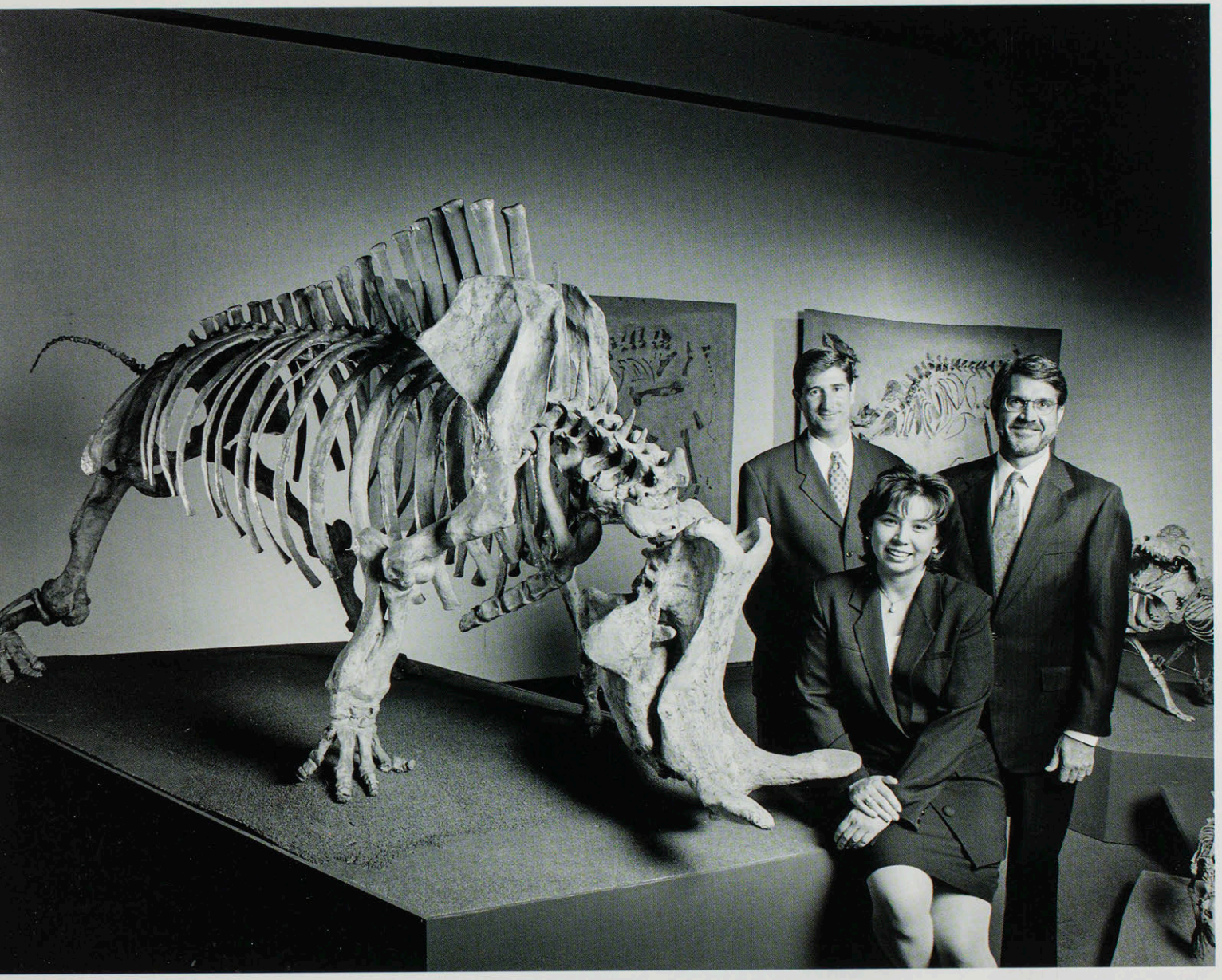
During 1998–1999, the museum's restricted grant revenue and indirect cost recovery were down because of a reduction in the number of exhibit development grants. On the other hand, we were able to increase unrestricted gifts by $338,836 and revenue from membership dues by $53,231.

In the fiscal year, we continued to upgrade the museum's physical facilities, using a combination of museum savings and county matching funds. We are continuing that process in the current year to ensure the safety and comfort of our visitors.

Dr. Karen L. Goldstein
Chief Deputy Director

Combined County of Los Angeles and Natural History Museum Foundation Revenues and Expenditures of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County from July 1, 1998, through June 30, 1999, and for fiscal years 1995–1996, 1996–1997, and 1997–1998

Revenues	**1995–1996**	**1996–1997**	**1997–1998**	**1998–1999**
Admission fees	$1,418,559	$1,432,776	$1,841,460	$1,590,129
Investment income	1,401,505	996,996	1,060,453	1,103,670
Membership fees	722,274	691,212	705,047	742,270
Shops, cafeteria, museum use	1,353,380	1,425,521	1,717,439	1,321,766
Petersen Automotive Museum	2,419,721	1,697,622	2,492,692	2,534,093
Education, Exhibits revenues	787,082	487,642	1,296,009	1,137,889
Miscellaneous	642,217	2,479,339	778,312	293,607
Support				
Restricted grants and contracts	$2,301,613	$2,351,100	$3,842,048	$2,363,004
Unrestricted gifts	1,060,426	965,094	961,144	1,299,980
County of Los Angeles appropriation	9,902,000	9,266,824	9,111,204	10,966,842
Total revenue	**$22,008,777**	**$21,794,126**	**$23,805,808**	**$23,353,250**
Expenditures				
Public programs	$2,417,036	$2,090,820	$3,169,191	$3,983,995
Petersen Automotive Museum	4,339,902	1,877,125	2,926,427	3,108,441
Research and Collections	2,614,293	2,691,589	2,469,762	3,001,112
Restricted grants and contracts	2,566,775	2,422,517	3,812,180	2,363,004
Shops, cafeteria, museum use	1,291,527	1,144,648	1,474,825	1,277,371
Development	729,967	565,824	714,207	767,438
Administration and Operations	9,179,353	8,499,622	8,208,702	8,565,294
Total expenditures	**$21,138,853**	**$19,292,145**	**$22,775,294**	**$23,066,655**
Operating surplus (deficit)	$869,924	$2,501,981	$1,030,514	$286,595



Jeffrey C. Beyer, vice-president of corporate communications for Farmers Insurance Group *(right),* and Angela L. Easton, Farmers community relations manager, with John H. Good, the museum's second director of corporate sponsorship.

The museum's skeleton of a titanothere, a rhinolike mammal that roamed North America and Asia about 35 million years ago, provides a focal point for the group: during the report year, Farmers Insurance Group sponsored several projects with a fossil theme for the museum, including the exhibition, *The Great Russian Dinosaurs,* and the annual fund-raising gala, the Dinosaur Ball. Farmers is also a sponsor of the first floor streetscape scenes at the Petersen Automotive Museum.

Grants and Contracts

As of June 30, 1999

American Association for the Advancement of Science
$7,000, Linda Abraham, Parents Involved, Pigeons Everywhere (PIPE) program
$3,000, Linda Abraham and Leah Melber, National Public Science Day

Getty Grant Program
$23,800, Linda Abraham, Multicultural undergraduate internships in education

Maxwell H. Gluck Foundation
$1,600,000, Linda Abraham, Skymobile, development over 3 years
$943,000, Linda Abraham, Seamobile operation for 3 years
$847,000, Linda Abraham, Earthmobile operation for 3 years

The John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation
$107,192, Tom Sitton, The Bowron years: Transforming the future of Los Angeles, 1938–1953

The Leakey Foundation
$6,000, John M. Harris, Underwrite expenses of Artist Mauricio Anton during preparation of illustrations for Lothagam monograph.

Philip M. McKenna Foundation
$14,000, Luis M. Chiappe, Assistance with paleontological investigations in Patagonia, South America

National Science Foundation
$278,935, Brian V. Brown, Systematics of ant-decapitating flies of the genus *Apocephalus*
$25,000, Arthur V. Evans, Partnerships for Enhancing Expertise in Taxonomy (PEET) program, Generation of taxonomic key and species catalog of the New World melolonthine scarab beetles, as part of a project with the University of Nebraska
$201,494, David Kizirian and Christine Thacker, Computerization of fishes, amphibians, and reptiles of the Natural History Museum
$1,652,000, James D. Olson, Lost civilizations of the Tarim Basin

Dr. Henry and Lilian Nesburn Foundation
$1,500, Linda Abraham, Award for children's writing contest

Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
$192,497, Julie Pfaffinger, Support of Parsons Discovery Center operations for 1998–1999

The Plum Foundation
$7,500, Brian V. Brown, Undergraduate research interns in entomology

RMW Paleo Associates
$10,700, J.D. Stewart, Curate and house fossil vertebrates from RMW projects in Ventura, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino Counties.

Southern California Edison
$6,589,776, Brenda Rounds, Support for geographic information and analytical services, 1995–2000

Tenenbaum Family
$16,000, Linda Abraham, Internships for high school students

U.S. Department of Commerce
$5,000, John E. Heyning, Life history data from incidentally killed cetaceans

Corporate Sponsors

July 1, 1998, through June 30, 1999

Media Partners of the Natural History Museum
KFWB Radio News 98
Metro Networks

Natural History Museum

The exhibition *Butterflies in Living Color* and The Butterfly Pavilion
HomeBase, Sponsor

The Los Angeles showing of the exhibition *The Great Russian Dinosaurs*
Farmers Insurance Group, Los Angeles Sponsor

The Los Angeles showing of the exhibition *Hunters of the Sky*
TRW Space & Electronics Group, Los Angeles Sponsor

The Los Angeles showing of the exhibition *Microbes: Invisible Invaders, Amazing Allies*
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Project Patagonia, research in Argentina
American Honda Motor Company, Sponsor

The Thirteenth Annual Insect Fair
Western Exterminator, Sponsor

Petersen Automotive Museum

The exhibition *Recycled Oil*
City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, Sponsor
Integrated Waste Management Board, Sponsor
Montgomery Watson, Sponsor

The exhibition of *cars and culture: Photographic Images of the 20th Century*
Lincoln, Sponsor

Cars and Stars Gala
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Meguiar's, Inc., Sponsor

It's a Duesy! Powerful Cars for Powerful People
Robb Report, Los Angeles Sponsor

The Exhibition of *Fifty Years of Porsche*
Porsche AG, Stuttgart, Germany
Porsche Cars of North America

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Somerset Catering
Taste & Company
Trader Joe's
Walt Disney Company
WATV

DONORS

July 1, 1998, through June 30, 1999

Museum Benefactors

The Natural History Museum is grateful to the following individuals, foundations, and corporations who made significant contributions, in addition to museum membership, in support of the museum's education programs, exhibitions, and operations.

Gifts of $200,000 or more
S. Oschin Family Foundation

Gifts of $50,000 to $150,000
Amgen Foundation
California Academy of Sciences

Gifts of $25,000 to $49,999
Ahmanson Foundation
Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation
Mr. Andrew Getty
Mr. Robert H. Lorsch
Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Petersen

Gifts of $10,000 to $24,999
Capital Group Companies, Inc.
Farmers Insurance Group, Inc.
Ms. Karen Tenenbaum Gale
The J. Paul Getty Trust
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BRIAN V. BROWN

At left, **two pieces of amber from a large collection donated to the Natural History Museum by Michael Oschin. Amber is of particular interest to museums because it often contains prehistoric life forms, especially insects and their relatives. The Baltic amber piece on the opposite page, which is about 1 inch across, contains a predatory dance fly, and a pseudoscorpion and fungus gnat are prominent in the 1 1/2-inch-long piece of Dominican amber at left.**

During the report period, Mr. Oschin not only donated material from his collection but also purchased and gave the museum a number of additional amber pieces containing phorids, the tiny "ant-decapitating" flies studied by Dr. Brian Brown, associate curator of entomology. Above is the type specimen for a new species that Dr. Brown described based on flies found in two of these pieces; the female phorid, from a 3/4-inch chunk of 35- to 40-million-year-old Baltic amber, is about 1/8-inch long.

The new species, *Hypocera oschini*, belongs to a genus of relatively primitive phorids. Although Dr. Brown and a European colleague had completed a study of the genus *Hypocera* just prior to Mr. Oschin's involvement, the new species has provided important additional information about the group's evolutionary history. Most surprising is that *Hypocera oschini*—which was found in amber collected near Kaliningrad, Russia—belongs to a subgroup of the *Hypocera* previously known only from North America.

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Members of a special advisory committee formed to assist the Natural History Museum in organizing the February 2000 opening of Camilo José Vergara's exhibition, *El Nuevo Mundo: The Landscape of Latino Los Angeles,* gather with representatives of the museum's senior staff under one of Mr. Vergara's photographs, "Victor and his *troca* in Boyle Heights." Julio Ramirez, chair of the committee and a member of the museum's Board of Governors, is in the center and front of the group on the right; other members are, *from left,* Annette Castro; Michael Nauyok, museum exhibitions; Dr. Karen L. Goldstein, the museum's chief deputy director; Christiana Hills, museum marketing and communications; Adan Ortega; Ramona Cortes Garza; Leonard Navarro, museum operations; and Linda Abraham, museum education.

***El Nuevo Mundo* was organized by the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., with Mr. Vergara, a distinguished documentary photographer and writer, as guest curator. Its appearance at the Natural History Museum is made possible by Union Bank of California. The advisory committee is providing assistance and enthusiastic support toward enhancing the impact of the Los Angeles showing of the exhibition and the multitude of special programs planned around it.**

MARC CARTER

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PHOTOGRAPHS DICK MEIER

This amazingly complete 33-million-year-old fossil skull of the world's oldest known echolocating toothed whale, or odontocete, was discovered by museum associate James L. Goedert in Washington's Olympic Mountains, where it was facing imminent destruction from river bank erosion of the encasing Early Oligocene sediments.

Two flat areas on the top of the skull, on each side of the central nostril opening, are undisputable evidence that this animal had a pair of "nasal sacs," the outgrowths of the nasal passages that in living toothed whales permit production of echolocation clicks used to navigate and find food. The photograph below shows the whale's ½-inch-long serrated teeth.

A grant from the National Geographic Society supported field work that yielded this and other important early whale specimens, the subjects of research by Mr. Goedert and Dr. Lawrence G. Barnes, curator of vertebrate paleontology. The 2 months of laboratory work required to remove the skull from the rock that held it was done by Howell W. Thomas and Michael J. Stokes, museum preparators.

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These little dinosaurs, carved by artists from the Pueblo of Zuni in New Mexico, are among the 3,951 miniature carvings donated to the Natural History Museum in 1997 by Dr. and Mrs. Boyd Walker. The 4-inch-long dinosaur on this page was made by Herbert Halate of catlinite and turquoise in 1989. In 1992, Nelson Yatsattie used serpentine for the 2-inch-high Godzilla-like creature shown opposite.

Zuni artists have carved animals of stone, also called fetishes, since ancient times, but dinosaurs did not become a part of their repertoire until the final decades of the twentieth century. The Walkers collected between 1970 and 1993, when expanding markets encouraged Zuni carvers to experiment with new materials and exotic subjects, and their collection is unparalleled in its coverage of this dynamic period in the Zuni carving tradition.

Dr. Margaret Ann Hardin, curator of anthropology, studies the changes that occur when the arts of indigenous communities become luxury goods for outsiders. She will use this collection as the foundation for her study of how Zuni fetishes are being incorporated into an increasingly global economy.

PHOTOGRAPHS DICK MEIER. CATALOG NUMBERS F.A. 3575.97-2509 (ABOVE) AND F.A. 3575.97-3653 (RIGHT)

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MARC CARTER

The staff charged with studying and caring for the Natural History Museum's fossil collections, with bones being cleaned and studied in the Paleontology Preparation Room. Seated in front are Dr. David P. Whistler *(center)* and Dr. Lawrence G. Barnes *(right)*, vertebrate paleontology curators who have been with the museum for almost thirty years.

Also present are *(from left)* Gary T. Takeuchi, senior museum technician (and now an after-school program instructor for the Education Division); Dr. Samuel A. McLeod, collections manager for vertebrate paleontology; Dr. John M. Harris, chief curator; Louise Kearin, preparator; Laureano Clavero, student-in-residence; Dr. J.D. Stewart, associate curator; Christopher A. Shaw, collections manager, and Shelley Cox, curatorial assistant—both of Rancho La Brea; Dr. Luis M. Chiappe, associate curator; Howell W. Thomas, senior museum technician; Dr. Kenneth E. Campbell, curator; and Lindsey T. Groves, collection manager for invertebrate paleontology.

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A complete list of the Natural History Museum's honorary staff members appears on the museum's Web page, at www.nhm.org/annual_report.

Produced as the Winter 2000 issue of TERRA , the magazine of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

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BACK COVER: Harold and Audrey Misawa *(left)* with their grandsons, 7-year-old Eric Fukuhara, and Scott Fukuhara, who is 4, and their son-in-law and daughter, Brian and Wendy Fukuhara. The Misawas and Fukuharas visited the Exposition Park museum's dinosaurs while on vacation from their homes in Kaneohe and Mililani, Hawaii. Photograph by Mark Carter

The Natural History Museum's new logo, shown on the back cover, celebrates the Tamkin Dueling Dinosaurs, a *Tyrannosaurus rex* and a *Triceratops* that have become the hallmark of the museum in Exposition Park. The logo was created by Justin Carroll of Hamagami/Carroll & Associates of Santa Monica, under the direction of Christiana D. Hills, executive vice-president of marketing and communications for the museum.

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OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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On exhibit . . .

ARTE Y ESTILO
The Lowriding Tradition

- A major exhibition at the Petersen Automotive Museum through May 28
- Selected photographs by Tatiana and Estevan Oriol in Exposition Park through July 16

"This is a working man's art . . . we are the Picassos of the boulevard."

The Los Angeles Mexican American community, lowriding aficionados since the 1950s, have created an art and style the likes of which have never been seen. A new exhibition at the Petersen Museum showcases a range of historic and innovative customized lowriders, including the classic pre-World War II bombs, the popular Chevy Impalas of the late 1950s and 1960s, and the trucks and bicycles that are the contemporary and less expensive offshoot of the lowrider aesthetic. The exhibition includes a fascinating overview of techniques and trends as well as a look at lowriding's place in Latino cultural and social activities.

Arte y Estilo features photographs by Estevan Oriol and Tatiana (a selection of the work of these two documentary photographers is also on view at the Natural History Museum in Exposition Park). Color detail shots of the low-slung cars are by Tatiana, a Los Angeles based photographer who has worked for Latino publications in the U.S. and Europe. The accompanying portraits of lowriding enthusiasts and the family and community events surrounding the autos are by Mr. Oriol, a member of one of Los Angeles's oldest car clubs, LifeStyle, and a photographer whose work has been honored in this country as well as Japan.

Arte y Estilo was developed with assistance and oversight from an advisory group including representatives from Plaza de la Raza, the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, *Lowrider Magazine,* UCLA Folklore Archives, and the Los Angeles Unified School District as well as members of the Latino art and business community. Denise Sandoval, a doctoral student in Cultural Studies at Claremont Graduate University, served as Guest Curator.

Photographs by Estevan Oriol *(top)* and Tatiana *(left)*

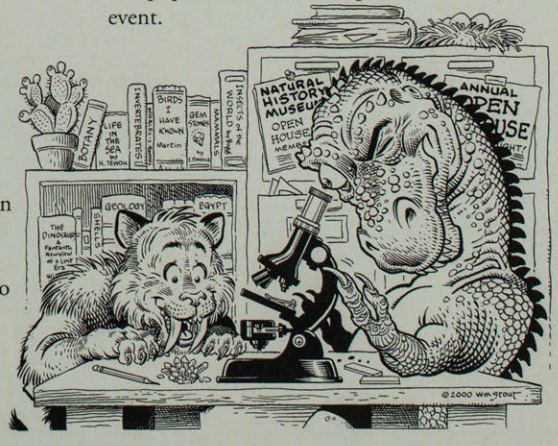
Save the dates
Members Only!

■ THE 29TH ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE

Exposition Park Museum
Friday, April 7, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

The Exposition Park museum is again opening its doors and cupboards, on all five floors, for museum members only. By providing the opportunity to go "behind the scenes," and meet curators and other staff members in their laboratories and offices, the museum offers members a more intimate view of its important research, exhibitions, and educational programs.

We look forward to welcoming you to this popular and fascinating members'-only event.



■ THE DINOSAUR BALL

Saturday, May 20, 7:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

The Board of Trustees and the Alliance Board of Directors of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County invite you to attend the 18th Annual Dinosaur Ball, the museum's elegant black tie gala. Dine and dance among the dinosaurs, preview our newest exhibit, *Savage Ancient Seas,* and support the scientific research, outstanding educational projects, and special exhibits of this world-class institution.

Tickets begin at $350 per person; Diamond Couple tickets are $1,000. For more information, please call 213/763-3308.

Drawing by William Stout

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The Natural History Museum exists to advance knowledge and to enable people of all ages, backgrounds, and interests to understand and appreciate their natural and cultural heritage. The museum assembles, conserves, interprets, and holds in trust collections of irreplaceable objects from nature and human history. These collections reveal the history of the Earth and the evolution and diversity of life and culture. They sustain programs of research, exhibits, education, and publication.

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
World Wide Web: http://www.nhm.org

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General information 213/763-DINO

■ George C. Page Museum of the La Brea Tar Pits
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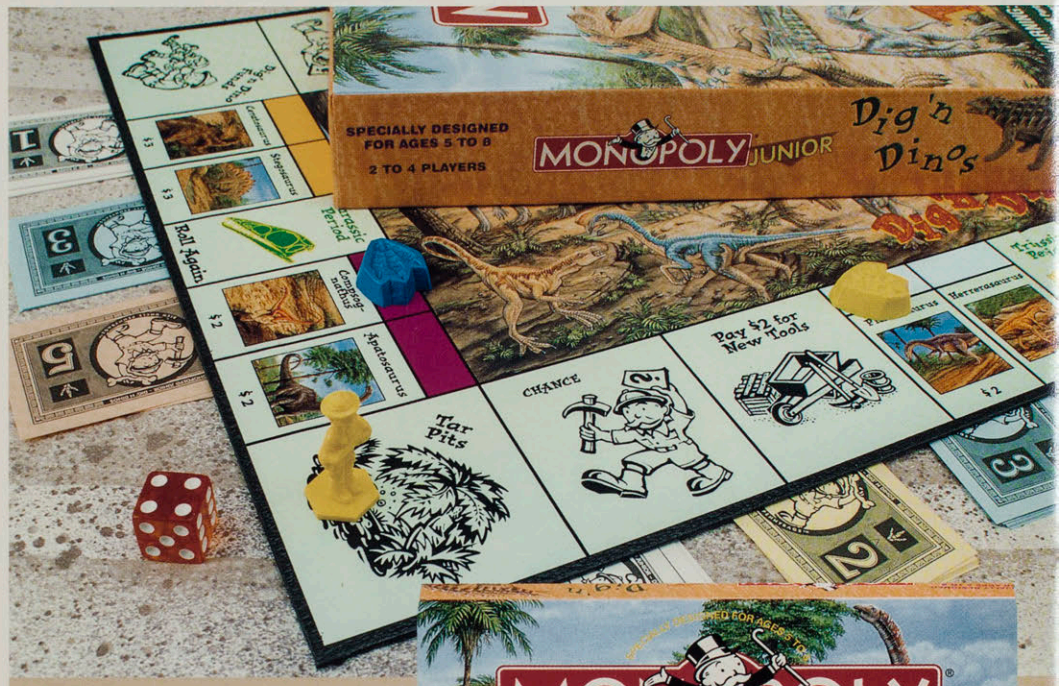

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